

other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 5074. An act to amend the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 to provide for continued payment of railroad retirement annuities by the Department of the Treasury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 5121. An act to modernize and update the National Housing Act and enable the Federal Housing Administration to use risk-based pricing to more effectively reach underserved borrowers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 5852. An act to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to enhance emergency communications at the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

The following concurrent resolutions were read, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 145. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress in support of a national bike month and in appreciation of cyclists and others for promoting bicycle safety and the benefits of cycling; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H. Con. Res. 235. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that States should require candidates for driver's licenses to demonstrate an ability to exercise greatly increased caution when driving in the proximity of a potentially visually impaired individual; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H. Con. Res. 384. Concurrent resolution recognizing and honoring the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated, the first intercollegiate Greek-letter fraternity established for African Americans; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H. Con. Res. 449. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 60th anniversary of the historic 1946 season of Major League Baseball Hall of Fame member Bob Feller and his return from military service to the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, July 26, 2006, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 310. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey the Newlans Project Headquarters and Maintenance Yard Facility to the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District in the State of Nevada.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-412. A Senate Joint Memorial adopted by the Colorado General Assembly relative to recognition of NASA's space exploration vision; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 06-002

Whereas, since its inception in 1958, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has accomplished many great scientific and technological feats, in addition to advancing humankind's knowledge of the earth and the universe; and

Whereas, Colorado, a leader in the aerospace industry, is home to more than 300

aerospace companies, has over 157,000 direct and indirect employees supported by the aerospace industry, and ranks third in the nation in private aerospace absolute employment; and

Whereas, Colorado is home to Air Force Space Command with facilities at Peterson, Schriever, and Buckley Air Force bases as well as the operational home to the Air Force Satellite Control Network and the Global Positioning System (GPS), for accurate navigation, position determination, and timing; and

Whereas, Colorado is also home to Northern Command, and the Army Space Battle Lab, each providing the Department of Defense with leading space technologies and homeland security, aiding in the protection of America from terrorists; and

Whereas, Colorado is home to world-class aerospace companies such as Lockheed Martin Space Systems, Ball Aerospace, Northrop Grumman, Boeing, Raytheon, and hundreds of small and mid-sized companies; and

Whereas, Colorado is home to world-class institutions of higher learning that continue to keep Colorado premier among the states with the most high-tech workers per capita and many astronauts, including the first Native American astronaut, and are the recipients of millions of dollars of federal government space research science and engineering grants and contracts; and

Whereas, Colorado is home to the Space Foundation, where the Aerospace Industry meets and focuses on 21st century education and the economic growth and strength of a broad range of space enterprises; and

Whereas, the desire to explore is part of America's character, and history has shown that space exploration benefits all humankind through new technologies for everyday application, new jobs across the entire economic enterprise, economic contributions through new markets and commercial products, education and inspiration, United States leadership, increased security, and a legacy for future generations; and

Whereas, a Space Exploration Vision has been articulated to affirm the United States' commitment to human space exploration and to give NASA a new focus and clear objectives, including long-term human and robotic programs to explore the solar system and a return to the moon that will ultimately enable future exploration of Mars and other destinations; and

Whereas, the Space Exploration Vision began with NASA returning the space shuttle to safe flight, with the chief purpose of completing assembly on the International Space Station, in addition to developing a new crew exploration vehicle to explore beyond earth's orbit to other worlds; and

Whereas, the Space Exploration Vision has the potential to drive innovation, development, and advancement in the aerospace and other high-technology industries across the nation and in the state of Colorado; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein, That the General Assembly of the State of Colorado hereby strongly encourages all members of the United States Congress to support the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Space Exploration Vision to enable the United States and the State of Colorado to remain leaders in the exploration and development of space; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Joint Memorial be sent to George W. Bush, President of the United States; Dick Cheney, Vice President of the United States; the members of Colorado's Congressional delegation; and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Administrator.

POM-413. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Legislature of the State of Texas relative to enacting a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan; to the Committee on Finance.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 720

Whereas, Taiwan is Texas' fifth-largest foreign market, and the agriculture and manufacturing sectors of the Texas economy, most notably the computer and electronic products, chemicals, and machinery industries, would benefit significantly if the United States enacted a free trade agreement with Taiwan; and

Whereas, a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan would substantially reduce or eliminate most import quotas, duties, and other trade barriers and expand market opportunities for manufactured goods and agricultural products from Texas and the entire United States; and

Whereas, the United States has completed or is in the process of negotiating free trade agreements with several countries and regions; reasons for pursuing a free trade agreement with Taiwan include its status as the United States' eighth-largest trading partner, its robust economy, and its long-standing educational and cultural ties with the United States; and

Whereas, Taiwan was admitted to the World Trade Organization on January 1, 2001; a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan would extend the coverage of World Trade Organization agreements to products, sectors, and conditions of trade that are now not adequately covered, and it would provide a platform to address issues such as Taiwan's 15.2 percent average tariff rate on agricultural imports from the United States; and

Whereas, Public Law 107-210, the Trade Act of 2002, gives the president the authority to enter into trade agreements with foreign countries whenever the president determines that one or more existing duties or other import restrictions of any foreign country or the United States are unduly burdening and restricting the foreign trade of the United States; and

Whereas, President George W. Bush, speaking before the historic signing of the United States-Australia Free Trade Agreement in 2004, emphasized that he supports free and open trade because "it has the power to create new wealth for whole nations and new opportunities for millions of people" and "has a record of creating jobs, raising living standards, and lowering consumer prices"; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, Hereby respectfully encourage the president of the United States to extend the benefits of free trade by enacting a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan; and be it further

Resolved, That the secretary of the senate forward official copies of this Resolution to the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to the congress.

POM-414. A Senate Joint Resolution adopted by the Colorado General Assembly relative to the condemnation of the Chinese government's persecution of practitioners of Falun Gong; to the Committee on Foreign Relations

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 06-027

Whereas, Falun Gong is a peaceful spiritual movement that originated in the People's Republic of China and has grown rapidly worldwide, including thousands of practitioners in the United States; and

Whereas, Falun Gong encourages its practitioners to cultivate "truthfulness, compassion, and forbearance"; and

Whereas, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China provides to its citizens freedom of speech, assembly, association, and religious belief; and

Whereas, Falun Gong practitioners, as well as members of pro-democracy groups and advocates of human rights reform, have become targets of severe government persecution in China in violation of China's own laws; and

Whereas, the 2005 United States Department of State's annual report on International Religious Freedom cited the Chinese government's persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China; and

Whereas, a 2005 press release from the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture, Manfred Nowak, referred to continuing ill-treatment and torture of Chinese ethnic minorities, political dissidents, and religious groups, including practitioners of Falun Gong; and

Whereas, Falun Gong practitioners report first-hand of the Chinese government's terror campaign, which survivors say includes persecution, arrests, imprisonment, torture, and murder; and

Whereas, recent reports from Chinese journalists describe a hospital in Sujiatun, a suburb of Shenyang in northeast China, that serves as a concentration camp for 6,000 Falun Gong practitioners and in which the medical staff performs experiments on detainees, including harvesting organs to be sold; and

Whereas, in addition to persecution in China, Falun Gong followers in the United States report that they have been victims of spying, harassment, intimidation, and violence by agents of the Chinese government; and

Whereas, the United States Constitution guarantees to its citizens freedom of religion, association, and speech, which allows Americans to live without fear and in accordance with their personal beliefs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein, (1) That we, the members of the Sixty-fifth General Assembly, strongly urge the government of the People's Republic of China to: (a) End immediately the harassment, detention, physical abuse, and imprisonment of its own citizens who exercise their legitimate rights to freedom of religion, speech, and association; and (b) Cease its interference in the constitutionally guaranteed religious and political freedoms of United States citizens who practice Falun Gong; and (2) That, in order to encourage China to respect the religious freedom of its citizens, we urge the government of the United States to: (a) Issue, an official, public, diplomatic statement to the Chinese Foreign Ministry condemning China's repeated violations of basic human rights protected in international covenants to which the People's Republic of China is a signatory; (b) Work with Chinese human rights activists, including practitioners of Falun Gong, to identify any Chinese authorities who have been responsible for acts of violence and persecution against Falun Gong followers in the United States; and (c) Investigate any illegal acts committed by Chinese consular officials and agents in the United States and determine an appropriate legal response; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to George W. Bush, President of the United States; Richard Cheney, Vice President of the United States; Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State; Bill Frist, Senate Majority Leader; Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; His Excellency Zhou Wenzhong, the Ambassador of the Peo-

ple's Republic of China to the United States; Bill Owens, Governor of * * *

POM-415. A joint resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee relative to the Meth-Endangered Children Protection Act of 2005; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 750

Whereas, meth trafficking and abuse is on the rise in the United States, and it has increased sharply since 2000; according to the 2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 12.3 million Americans ages 12 and older reported trying meth at least once during their lifetimes; and

Whereas, the Office of National Drug Policy reports that between 2000 and 2003, more than 51,000 illegal meth labs were seized in the United States, and the number of clandestine labs has been rising rapidly; in fact, a high number of state and local governments now consider meth the greatest drug threat in the country; and

Whereas, sadly, thousands of children have become innocent victims of the meth epidemic; approximately 10,600 children in the United States were affected by meth lab seizures and incidents between 2000 and 2003; these children were either present at lab seizures or lived where the labs were seized, often in extremely filthy and neglectful conditions; and

Whereas, another 2,900 children were removed from their homes during the same period because of neglect or abuse by meth-addicted parents; incidents related to meth labs also accounted for injuries to 96 children and the deaths of eight others; in Tennessee alone, law enforcement seized nearly 1,200 labs between 2003 and 2004, representing a 397 percent increase from 2000; Tennessee accounts for 75 percent of the meth lab seizures in the Southeast, and more than 700 children in Tennessee are placed in protective custody each year as a result of meth lab seizures; and

Whereas, children exposed to meth because of a lab in the home often need specialized services to overcome the effects of their exposure; children removed from homes where meth is manufactured can suffer from increased heart rate, agitation, irritability and vomiting, muscle breakdown, fever, ataxia, and seizures; they can also suffer physical, medical, education neglect, and learning disabilities; and

Whereas, many of the children rescued from these environments need specialized medical attention, psychological care, and other services; unfortunately, few states have the funds to provide these services or to provide social workers and other professionals with the specialized training and resources necessary to render appropriate care to children and ensure that subsequent placements in foster or adoptive homes are successful; and

Whereas, the Meth-Endangered Children Protection Act would establish a \$10 million annual competitive grant program to support model efforts such as California's DEC program and to assist states in establishing similar programs; grantees would be required to provide matching dollars for federal funds awarded under this grant; and

Whereas, thousands of children have become victims of the rising meth epidemic; through no fault of their own, these children, suffering at the hands of their meth-addicted parents, urgently need medical attention, psychological care, and social services; the Meth-Endangered Children Protection Act is of vital importance in ensuring that our nation's children recover from the ravages of meth abuse; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the 104th General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, the House of

Representatives concurring, That we hereby urge the United States Congress to pass the Meth-Endangered Children Protection Act of 2005 to aid the most vulnerable victims of this terrible and destructive drug epidemic; and be it further

Resolved, That an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President and the Secretary of the United States Senate, the Speaker and the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and each member of Tennessee's Congressional delegation.

POM-416. A joint resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee relative to the reauthorization of the special provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 911

Whereas, following the Civil War, Congress adopted the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment establishing the citizenship rights of all persons born in the United States and requiring that no one be denied due process or equal protection of the laws, and the Fifteenth Amendment securing the right to vote for all citizens, regardless of a person's race, color, or former condition of servitude; and

Whereas, despite the enactment of these significant constitutional commands, for nearly 100 years, states and local jurisdictions passed laws and instituted practices designed to circumvent the Civil War amendments; many states erected barriers to access to the polls, including infamous poll taxes and literacy or good character tests; African-Americans, Latinos, and other minorities and those who advocated on their behalf often were subjected to severe violence and intimidation or, in some cases, death if they attempted to register to vote or cast a ballot; and

Whereas, confronted with aggressive and relentless defiance of the Constitution, Congress enacted the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in order to ensure that the rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments were enforced; and

Whereas, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is widely viewed as one of the most successful civil rights statutes ever enacted; it bans literacy tests and other discriminatory devices, outlaws discriminatory practices and procedures during the voting process, authorizes the appointment of federal election monitors and observers, and creates various means for protecting and enforcing the rights of American citizens, including racial and language minorities, to vote; and

Whereas, although the struggle to ensure fairness in the electoral process continues, as a result of the Voting Rights Act, racial and language minorities have enjoyed enhanced opportunities to participate in the electoral process, cast votes, and elect their candidates of choice; and

Whereas, in 2007, certain "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act that were enacted to address discriminatory voting practices and the present effects of those practices could expire if not renewed by Congress; and

Whereas, these provisions include:

Section 2: This provision equips voters with the means to challenge election laws that result in a denial or abridgement of voting rights on account of race, color, or language minority status;

Section 4: The coverage provision, which determines which states and jurisdictions must seek Section 5 pre-clearance; the coverage formula reaches states and jurisdictions with some of the most active histories of discrimination;

Section 5: The federal pre-clearance of voting changes provisions, which requires covered jurisdictions to prove that voting

changes are not discriminatory before they may legally take effect;

Sections 6-9: The Federal Examiner/Observer provisions, which set forth criteria for election monitoring by the Department of Justice; and

Section 203: The bilingual voting materials provisions, which mandate that certain voting materials must be translated for language minorities in certain jurisdictions; and

Whereas, by 2007, Congress will vote on whether to extend these "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act; the effects of the long history of voting discrimination persist; the "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act continue to be extremely important tools for protecting minority voting; during the reauthorization process, Congress will compile a record that sets forth the continuing effects of the nation's widespread voting discrimination; and

Whereas, voting is the cornerstone of American democracy and, during the reauthorization process, Congress and individuals and organizations concerned with maintaining the protections afforded by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 will have an opportunity to present the evidence necessary to support renewal of the "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; in the meantime, all eligible voters should register, confirm their registration status, and exercise the right to vote so that the long struggle to expand the franchise yields meaningful results: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the 104th General Assembly of the State of Tennessee, the House of Representatives concurring, That we hereby urge Congress to reauthorize the "special provisions" of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Assembly of the State of Tennessee will collaborate with all organizations dedicated to ensuring the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and be it further

Resolved, That an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Speaker and the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President and the Secretary of the U.S. Senate, and each member of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation.

POM-417. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Legislature of the State of Texas relative to memorializing the Congress of the United States to address problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs concerning the provision of health care and benefits, the adjudication of claims, accountability, and outreach and to enact legislation that creates an appropriation formula that ensures predictable and adequate funding for the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 9

Whereas, military veterans who have served their country honorably and who were promised and have earned health care and benefits from the federal government through the Department of Veterans Affairs are now in need of these benefit; and

Whereas, the funding of the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs has failed to reflect the admission of newly eligible veterans in the wake of the Veterans' Health Care Eligibility Reform Act of 1996 and has fallen short of the amount needed to counter soaring medical care inflation, resulting in a funding shortfall of at least \$10 billion; and

Whereas, the current discretionary method of funding the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration is uncertain

and is subject annually to the whim and competing priorities of congress, to the detriment of the veterans being served; and

Whereas, the Vietnam Veterans of America organization supports the adoption of a new funding mechanism for the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration that is indexed to medical inflation and the per capita use of the administration's health care system; and

Whereas, the substantial delay in adjudicating veterans' claims for service-connected disability compensation is the cause of much anguish and anger among veterans and is the result of a lack of funding of the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, which has led to an insufficient number of adjudicators and the inadequate training and supervision of adjudicators; and

Whereas, while the vast majority of Department of Veterans Affairs employees are dedicated to serving veterans, it is necessary to ensure that employee accountability standards be strengthened at senior and junior levels; and

Whereas, while more than five million veterans use the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs for their health care needs, tens of thousands more are eligible for benefits of which they are unaware due, to inadequate outreach efforts by the department: Now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to address problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs related to the provision of health care and benefits, the adjudication of claims, accountability, and outreach and to enact legislation that creates an appropriation formula that ensures predictable and adequate funding of the health care programs of the Veterans Health Administration; and be it further

Resolved, That the secretary of the senate forward official copies of this Resolution to the secretary of veterans affairs, the president of the United States, the president of the senate and speaker of the house of representatives of the United States Congress, and all members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this Resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

POM-418. A resolution adopted by the Cook County Board of Commissioners of the State of Illinois relative to extending or making permanent all sections of the Voting Right Act of 1965; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BOND, from the Committee on Appropriations, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

H.R. 5576. A bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, District of Columbia, and independent agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 109-293).

By Mr. MCCAIN, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, without amendment:

S. 3526. A bill to amend the Indian Land Consolidation Act to modify certain requirements under that Act (Rept. No. 109-294).

By Mr. SPECTER, from the Committee on the Judiciary:

Report to accompany S. 2703, a bill to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Rept. No. 109-295).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. SPECTER:

S. 3731. A bill to regulate the judicial use of presidential signing statements in the interpretation of Acts of Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. PRYOR:

S. 3732. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain liquid crystal divide (LCD) flat panel displays; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. PRYOR:

S. 3733. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain plasma flat panel displays; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS):

S. 3734. A bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to allow a judge to whom a case is transferred to retain jurisdiction over certain multidistrict litigation cases for trial, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BAUCUS:

S. 3735. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on vulcanized rubber felt bottom boots for use in waders; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. BAUCUS:

S. 3736. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on vulcanized rubber lug bottom boots for use in fishing waders; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. REED, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. DODD, and Mr. CHAFFE):

S. 3737. A bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Washington-Rochambeau Route National Historic Trail; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BAUCUS (for himself and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 3738. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional standard deduction for real property taxes for nonitemizers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. COLEMAN (for himself, Mr. REED, Mr. KOHL, and Mr. MARTINEZ):

S. 3739. A bill to establish a Consortium on the Impact of Technology in Aging Health Services; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. FEINGOLD:

S. 3740. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reform the system of public financing for Presidential elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. LUGAR (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Ms. STABENOW, and Mr. LEAHY):

S. 3741. A bill to provide funding authority to facilitate the evacuation of persons from Lebanon, and for other purposes; considered and passed.

By Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. SMITH, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. INOUE, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 3742. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives to encourage investment in the expansion of freight rail infrastructure capacity and to enhance modal tax equity; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. ALLEN):

S. 3743. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to improve newborn screening